

*Ranking Tool Summary*  
**for FY2017 - A3 CFO/AFO**  
(Draft)

**National Priorities:**

Questions:

Number	Question	Points
1	a. Is the program application to support the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)? If answer is "Yes", do not answer any other national level questions. If answer is "No", proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.	250
2	a. Implementing the practices in a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP)?	15
2	b. Implementing the practices in a Nutrient Management Plan (NMP)?	10
2	c. Reducing impacts from sediment, nutrients, salinity, or pesticides on land adjoining a designated "impaired water body" (TMDL, 303d listed waterbody, or other State designation)?	10
2	d. Reducing the impacts from sediment, nutrients, salinity, or pesticides in a "non-impaired water body"?	10
2	e. Implementing practices that improve water quality through animal mortality and carcass management?	10
3	a. Implementing irrigation practices that reduce aquifer overdraft.	15
3	b. Implementing irrigation practices that reduce on-farm water use?	10
3	c. Implementing practices in an area where the applicant participates in a geographically established or watershed-wide project?	10
3	d. Implementing practices that reduce on-farm water use as a result of changing to crops with lower water consumptive use, the rotation of crops, or the modification of cultural operations?	10
4	a. Meeting on-farm regulatory requirements relating to air quality or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	10
4	b. Implementing practices that reduce on-farm emissions of particulate matter (PM2.5, PM10)?	10
4	c. Implementing practices that reduce on-farm generated greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide (CO <sub>2</sub> ), methane (CH <sub>4</sub> ), and nitrous oxide (N <sub>2</sub> O)?	10
4	d. Implementing practices that increase on-farm carbon sequestration?	10
5	a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil "T")?	10
5	b. Increasing organic matter and carbon content, and improving soil tilth and structure?	10
6	a. Implementing practices benefitting threatened and endangered, at-risk, candidate, or species of concern.	10
6	b. Implementing practices that retain wildlife and plant habitat on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) or other set-aside program?	10
6	c. Implementing practices benefitting honey bee populations or other pollinators?	10
6	d. Implementing land-based practices that improve habitat for aquatic wildlife?	10
7	a. Implementing practices that result in the management control of noxious or invasive plant species on non-cropland?	10
7	b. Implementing practice in an Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPM)?	10
8	a. Reducing on-farm energy consumption?	10
8	b. Implementing practice(s) identified in an approved AgEMP or energy audit, which meet ASABE S612 criteria?	10
9	a. Enhancement of existing conservation practice(s) or conservation systems already in place at the time the application is received?	10
Total Points		500

## State Issues:

### Questions:

Sub-heading Number	Question Number	Question	Points
1		The application is for the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP) the agency will assign significant ranking priority and conservation benefit by answering "Yes" to the following question. Answering "Yes" to question 1.1 will result in the application being awarded the maximum amount of points that can be earned for the State priority category.	
	1	The application is for the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP) the agency will assign significant ranking priority and conservation benefit by answering "Yes" to the following question. Answering "Yes" to question 1.1 will result in the application being awarded the maximum amount of points that can be earned for the State priority category.	300
2		WATER QUALITY – Excessive Nutrients and Organics in Surface Water WATER QUALITY – Excessive Suspended Sediment and Turbidity in Surface Water	
	1	Will practice(s) in the application treat livestock waste for an existing livestock operation that is directly impacting a perennial or intermittent watercourse via discharge? There is evidence to show that discharge(s) have occurred at the site and reached the watercourse. (Can only answer Yes to one of questions 2.1 - 2.4)	25
	2	Will practice(s) in the application treat livestock waste for an existing livestock operation that is not directly impacting a perennial or intermittent watercourse via discharge? There is no evidence that discharge(s) from the site have reached the watercourse. (Can only answer Yes to one of questions 2.1 - 2.4)	15
	3	Will practice(s) in the application treat livestock waste for an existing livestock operation that is directly impacting a perennial or intermittent watercourse via discharge where up to 25% expansion of the livestock operation is planned? There is evidence to show that discharge(s) have occurred at the site and reached the watercourse. (Can only answer Yes to one of questions 2.1 - 2.4)	15
	4	Will practice(s) in the application treat livestock waste for an existing livestock operation that is not directly impacting a perennial or intermittent watercourse via discharge where up to 25% expansion of the livestock operation is planned? There is no evidence that discharge(s) from the site have reached the watercourse. (Can only answer Yes to one of questions 2.1 - 2.4)	5
	5	Will practice(s) in the application treat livestock waste for an existing livestock operation, where the entire facility is relocated to a new less environmentally sensitive location?	10
	6	The application is located within one of the following approved water quality projects: TMDL's, Watershed Protection Program Fund (WSPF), Water Protection Fund (WPF), EPA 319 Project, Iowa Watershed Improvement Review Board (IWIRB) Fund, or Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy Priority Watersheds?	10
	7	Through Conservation Planning the planned practice(s) in the application will have a positive effect on the identified Ag related nonpoint source impairment within a one of the following approved water quality projects: TMDL, Watershed Protection Program Fund (WSPF), Water Protection Fund (WPF), EPA 319 Project, or Iowa Watershed Improvement Review Board (IWIRB) Fund, or Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy Priority Watersheds?	15
	8	Will practices in the application limit access or exclude grazing livestock from a perennial stream, intermittent stream or other water body?	10

	9	Application of planned practices will address the identified resource concern, Excessive Nutrients and Organics in Surface Water to the planning criteria. (Can only answer yes to one of 2-9 or 2-10)	15
	10	Application of planned practices will improve the identified resource concern, Excessive Nutrients and Organics in Surface Water. (Can only answer yes to one of 2-9 and 2-10)	5
3		DEGRADED PLANT CONDITION – Forage Quality and Palatability, Productivity, Health and Vigor. DOMESTIC ANIMALS – Inadequate Quantities and Quality of Feed and Forage. DOMESTIC ANIMALS – Inadequate Stockwater	
	1	The applicant agrees to implement (528) Prescribed Grazing.	25
	2	The application will increase paddock numbers in the grazing system by at least 100% and as a minimum implement a medium intensity grazing system with < 7 day rotation frequency and at least one 35 day rest. (Can only answer yes to one of question 3-2, 3-3 or 3-4)	20
	3	The application will increase paddock numbers in the grazing system by at least 50% and as a minimum implement a low intensity grazing system with > 7 day rotation frequency and at least one 35 day rest. (Can only answer yes to one of question 3-2, 3-3 or 3-4)	15
	4	The application will increase paddock numbers in the grazing system less than 50% and as a minimum implement a low intensity grazing system with > 7 day rotation frequency and at least one 35 day rest. (Can only answer yes to one of question 3-2, 3-3 or 3-4)	5
	5	The application includes 512 Forage and Biomass Planting to achieve at least 3 perennial grasses and 2 Legumes in the forage mix.	10
	6	The application includes a Livestock Watering System which will provide Watering Facilities located at least every 600 feet from any point in the grazing system as required by the NRPH 5.2-39(f).	10
4		SOIL QUALITY DEGRADATION – Organic Matter Depletion (Soil Health)	
	1	Is Soil Conditioning Index improved at least 0.3 points by applying the practices in this application? (Use Dominant Critical soil map unit.)	20
	2	Is STIR rating improved at least 30 points by applying the practices in this application? (Use Dominant Critical soil map unit.)	20
5		SOIL EROSION – Sheet and Rill, Ephemeral Gully and Classic Gully	
	1	Will the implementation of practices in this application convert Intensive row crop acres (CC, CB, CCB) to include perennial cover (Crop, Pasture or Forest) where there wasn't before on at least 5% of application area? (Must be new acres converted, not part of normal rotation. The length of perennial cover will meet the practice lifespan.)	15
	2	Practices in the application support the maintenance of expiring CRP acres with a predominant LCC of IV or worse being maintained in a perennial cover. (Based on a predominance, >51%, of acres retained in perennial cover)	10
	3	Application of planned practices will reduce Sheet and Rill Erosion from above Tolerable Soil Loss (T) to T or below on application area. (RUSLE2) (Can only answer yes to one of 5-3 or 5-4)	20
	4	Application of planned practices in this application will improve Sheet and Rill Erosion, but will not reach Tolerable Soil Loss (T) on application area. (RUSLE2) (Can only answer yes to one of 5-3 or 5-4)	5
	5	Application of planned practices in this application will control all ephemeral gully erosion on application area?	15
	6	Application of planned practices in this application will control two or more Active Classic Gullies? (Can only answer yes to one of question 5-6 or 5-7)	15
	7	Application of planned practices in this application will control at least one Active Classic Gully? (Can only answer yes to one of question 5-6 or 5-7)	10
6		FISH & WILDLIFE – Inadequate Habitat Cover/Shelter	

	1	Application includes planned practices that enhance fish and wildlife habitat improvement. Two or more of the following primary fish and wildlife practices are part of the application that cover at least 5% of the application area or a minimum of 3 acres, whichever is less: 327 Conservation Cover, 391 Riparian Forest Buffer, 395 Stream Habitat Improvement and Management, 422 Hedgerow Planting, 643 Restoration & Management of Declining Habitats, 644 Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management, 645 Upland Wildlife Habitat Management, 646 Shallow Water Development and Management, 647 Early Successional Habitat Development/Management, 657 Wetland Restoration. (Can only answer yes to one of question 6-1 and 6-2)	15
	2	Application includes planned practices that enhance fish and wildlife habitat improvement. At least one of the following primary fish and wildlife practices are part of the application that cover at least 5% of the application area or a minimum of 3 acres, whichever is less: 327 Conservation Cover, 391 Riparian Forest Buffer, 395 Stream Habitat Improvement and Management, 422 Hedgerow Planting, 643 Restoration & Management of Declining Habitats, 644 Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management, 645 Upland Wildlife Habitat Management, 646 Shallow Water Development and Management, 647 Early Successional Habitat Development/Management, 657 Wetland Restoration. (Can only answer yes to one of question 6-1 and 6-2)	10
	3	Application includes practices that are planned in a wildlife friendly manner that enhance fish and wildlife habitat improvement. Two or more of the following supporting fish and wildlife practices are part of the application that cover at least 5% of the application area or a minimum of 3 acres whichever is less: 338 Prescribed Burning, 340 Cover Crop, 380 Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment, 393 Filter Strip, 580 Streambank and Shoreline Protection, 612 Tree/Shrub Establishment, 666 Forest Stand Improvement. (Can only answer yes to one of question 6-3 and 6-4)	10
	4	Application includes practices that are planned in a wildlife friendly manner that enhance fish and wildlife habitat improvement. At least one of the following supporting fish and wildlife practices are part of the application that cover at least 5% of the application area or a minimum of 3 acres whichever is less: 338 Prescribed Burning, 340 Cover Crop, 380 Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment, 393 Filter Strip, 580 Streambank and Shoreline Protection, 612 Tree/Shrub Establishment, 666 Forest Stand Improvement. (Can only answer yes to one of question 6-3 and 6-4)	5
	5	Application includes establishing pollinator habitat according to Iowa Job Sheet "Pollinator Habitat" that includes milkweed species on at least 5% of the application area with a minimum of 3 acres. (Can only answer yes to one of question 6-5 and 6-6)	10
	6	Application includes establishing pollinator habitat according to Iowa Job Sheet "Pollinator Habitat" on at least 5% of the application area with a minimum of 3 acres. (Can only answer yes to one of question 6-5 and 6-6)	5
		Maximum Points:      Total Points	695

**Local Issues:**

Questions:

Sub-heading Number	Question Number	Question	Points
	1	Is the program application for the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)? If answer is "Yes" do not answer any other local level questions. If answer is "No" proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.	350
	2	Application addresses Degraded Plant Condition or Fish and Wildlife Resource concern(s).	28
	3	Application addresses Water Quality Degradation resource concern(s)	53
	4	Application addresses Soil Erosion Resource Concern(s)	78
	5	Application addresses Soil Quality Degradation Resource Concern(s)	138
	6	Application area is predominantly located in a locally identified priority watershed and application treat the specific resource concerns of that priority area. Watersheds are listed on the county website information page.	53
		Maximum Points:      Total Points	700